

# The Literary Criticism in Kairouan during the fifth century of Hegira

A dissertation presented by:

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To the department of Arabic Language, College of  
Arts,

Al- Mustansirya University as partial fulfillment of  
the requirements to gain Ph. D degree in Arabic  
Literature.

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1426 H 2006 A.D



## Abstract

This dissertation deals with the study of literary criticism in Kairouan during the fifth century of Hegira where the literary criticism was boomed by Isshac Al-Husari in his book

**"Zahr Al- Adab w Thamr Al- Albab"** that is, the flowers of literature and fruit of minds" Abi Mohammad Abdul Karim

Al- Nahshli in his book:

**"Al- Mumta'a in Sna'at Al- Sha'ar w amala"** "that is, The enjoyment in the poetry making and its works" and Abi Ali Ibn Rashiq Al- Kairouani and his books:

**"Al- Aumda, and Kuradht Al- Thahb fi Ma'arfat Asha'ar Alarab, and Anmothj Al- Zaman fi Shua'araa Al- Kairouan"** that is "The authority, The Gold waste in knowing the Arab poetry and the model of time in the poets of Kairouan" and Abi Abd-Allah Ibn Sharf Al-Kairouani in his book

**"Masa'al Al- Antiqad"** that is "the issues of criticism".

The dissertation divided into four chapters preceded by a preface entitled "The scientific and literary life in Kairouan".

The first chapter studies the scholars of criticism and their works and methods.

The chapter subdivided into three parts, they are:

The men of criticism in Kairouan

The books of criticism in Kairouan

The methods of criticism books and their styles.

The second chapter deals with "the building of poem". It includes four parts, they are:

The work of poetry and sharpening the talent to it, The poetry writing and its methods, The syllables and the first line of poems and Beginning, exiting and Finalizing.

The third chapter deals with the poetic purposes. It includes three parts as follows:  
The first part is on courtship, while the second part is on "praise, pride and elegy", the final part is on achievement blaming, menace and satire.

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The fourth chapter deals with "The rhetoric effort in Kairouan". It includes four parts as follows:  
The first one is about rhetorics in Kairouan, the second one on the arts of rhetorics of Ibn Rashiq, while the third one deals with Ibn Rashiq's figure of speech. The final part is about the arts of meaning in Ibn Rashiq's books.

The study reached several findings, the most important of them as follows:

1. The Kairouan critics whose critical works are dealt in this dissertation, were influenced by the critics of the Arab Eastern part and that was obvious from their more quotations from the critics of Arab Eastern part.
2. It is true that their critical efforts that were known in Kairouan influenced clearly by their eastern Arab counterparts, despite that and even though they could not establish an independent critical school, they were able to form a movement connecting with this field and with specific features.
3. These critics were different as regards to whether they were followers of the classic school or they were innovators. Even though generally they were followers of the classic school, Ibn Rashiq was recognized by his diligence and the clarity of personality and that made him a distinguished critic

as compared with the other Kairouan critics whom depended upon the old writings and stories particularly Al- Husari.

4. Al- Husari emphasized so much on the literary work and critical efforts in a stage extending from the innovator writers to his age with a reference that he did not neglect the stages preceding that date, while Al- Nahshli mainly concentrated on the later critics, though he sometimes presented the modern critics, while Ibn Rashiq and Ibn Sharaf whose studies covered all different historical stages including their age, more over they dealt with its poets particularly Ibn Rashiq in his book "The model of time".

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5. The critics of the fifth century in Kairouan were known in poetry, in addition to criticism. They gave their poems as examples, especially Ibn Rashiq and Abdul Karim Al- Nahshali in the chapters that they had studied.
6. The artistic trend was dominant in the criticism of this stage. It depended on ethics, but the researcher did not fail to deal with something of psychological and linguistic trend.
7. Poetry was the pivot of criticism for them, and that might due to their preference poetry to prose.
8. Since the critics of Kairouan were poets, they were able to handle cases and topics of poetry.
9. The rhetoric lesson made the Kairouan's critics busy, especially Ibn Rashiq who exceeded them due

to his great remarkable efforts in this field. He studied a lot of rhetoric arts including figures of speech, rhetorics and meaning "semantics" with a clear style attracting the receiver because it consisted of literary taste and far away from the logic that deprive rhetorics form its delicious brightness as compared to other critics who made it reach stagnancy

10. Ibn Rashiq classified his book "Gold waste" in the literary innovation and not in literary plagiarizing as some scholars thought that wrongly.
11. Despite of Ibn Rashiq's saying that the poetic line is an independent, he tended to the unity of poem. This contradicts with what some contemporary scholars said that Ibn Rashiq concerned with the unity of poetic line and its independence form the rest of poem.

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